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Project

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES COEUR D'ALENE FOREST INSECT LABORATORY

RE: Mountain Pine Beetle Control, Kootenai National Forest

by
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Forest Insect Laboratory
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
May 4, 1939

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FOREST INSECT
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES COEUR D'ALENE FOREST INSECT LABORATORY

Re: Mountain Pine Beetle Control, Kootenai National Forest

The period from April 17 to 26 inclusive was spent on the Kootenai National Forest assisting in the administration of mountain pine beetle control work, particularly in determining the extent of the area to be treated and in checking the work of the spotters. In general, this project had been planned and organized so well that no suggestions for improvement could be offered. Two camps were used, and snow conditions were such that by the time the second camp was moved in, spotting had been completed in the first area so that the entire spotting organization from camp #1 was moved to camp #2. This greatly facilitated the spotting work in camp #2 because the crews were not only thoroughly trained but also hardened to the work.

Spotting was done entirely on snow shoes except where snow had left the higher southern exposures. There were three 3-man spotting crews, the personnel of which had all had previous spotting experience. One of the chief spotters, Mr. Clarence Davidson, had formerly been a camp manager, and the other two, Messrs. Walter Carpenter and Harry Kins, were ranger alternates. Each spotter examined a strip two and one-half chains in width while the chief spotter blazed the compass line and constructed the map. This method combined with the experienced

crews resulted in cheap and efficient spotting. It is also believed that the deep snow facilitated rather than hampered spotting, primarily because of greater ease in travelling and also because the trees stood out sharply against the background of snow. This was also the opinion of the spotters who had worked under other conditions.

In any event, 433 infested trees were tagged on 830 acres in 57 man-days, which included Saturday afternoons. This gives a production of 14.5 acres and 7.5 trees per man-day at an approximate cost of 45 cents per tree. Only one infested tree was picked up in four days of check spotting so that this work was not only cheap but also efficient.

The bulldozing of snow in order to establish both camps will undoubtedly prove to be a costly item. The rental for the dozer at \$1.35 per hour, an operator at \$0.90 per hour and two helpers at \$0.50 will add approximately \$0.20 to the cost of each tree if 1,200 trees are treated as anticipated. In spite of this added cost, however, it is believed that when this project is completed, it will be found that the work was not only thorough but that the trees will have been treated at a low cost.

North Keeler Creek Unit

Camp 1, in charge of Mr. George Ramlow, was located in the North Keeler Creek unit approximately one-half mile east of the east boundary of the area, making a walk of about two miles to reach the

west boundary. This unit comprises 1,840 acres, in which there were an estimated 600 trees. However, Mr. Terrell stated that most of the infestation would be found in Surprise Draw and the stands along the lower portion of North Keeler Creek, estimating that there were 440 trees in this localized area. This is exactly the situation found to prevail, and in consequence the upper portion of the North Keeler Creek unit was eliminated and not spotted. There were 433 trees tagged in this main area, and in addition approximately 50 trees were treated in two small outlying areas recommended for consideration by Mr. Terrell. These two areas were of such size and shape that they were not spotted, but all trees were located and treated immediately by the treating crew. In all, there will be nearly 500 trees treated in this area on approximately 1,000 acres.

Treating work had been started in this unit and under the leadership of an efficient camp manager decks were built carefully and excellent burns were being secured. A number of decks were checked which needed no second burn to treat the ends. A horse was available in this camp and will be used for skidding in the larger groups as soon as snow conditions permit.

Benning Creek Unit

Camp 2, in charge of Mr. Grant Harley, was located in the Benning Creek unit in approximately the same relative location from

the infested area as camp 1. Spotting work in this area had just been started so that no treating had as yet been done. This unit comprises 1,720 acres, in which there were an estimated 724 trees. It was found that practically all of the infested trees were located in or near creek bottoms and draws in this unit, so that a considerable portion of the area around the perimeter of the unit was eliminated. This will reduce the acreage to approximately 1,100 acres or less, which will include practically all of the infested trees. Although the spotters were finding approximately two infested trees per acre at the time of my departure, they were working in the most heavily infested portion of the area, and it is believed that the estimate of 724 trees will prove to be accurate.

Respectfully submitted,

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